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Professional Journal Reading #4 – Electronic Portfolios for Assessment

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“An electronic portfolio is not a haphazard collection of artifacts (i.e., a digital scrapbook or multimedia presentation) but rather a reflective tool that demonstrates growth over time,” stated Helen Barrett. Just as Barrett states, electronic portfolios enable educators to see a larger growth than typically found in projects, papers, and tests. Sometime those assessments are fleeting results, but electronic portfolios provide ongoing assessment and a larger development of growth. In addition to show a wide range of growth, electronic portfolios can implement a variety of medium: audio, video, graphics, and text. In Helen Barrett’s article, “Create Your Own Electronic Portfolio,” she begins to describe tools that are available to create electronic portfolios, how to find the right tool for your electronic portfolio, and steps on how to begin a electronic portfolio.

The seven generic portfolio software are relational databases, hypermedia “card” software, multimedia authoring software, world wide web (HTML) pages, Adobe Acrobat (PDF files), multimedia slideshows, and video (digital and analog). Several of these formats I was familiar with. With so many options that are web based today, I could see many students and teachers using that route when deciding which tool to use for their electronic portfolio. When deciding which software to use, Barrett used a handy chart to organize the qualities of each software analyzing common development tools, structure and links, player available, advantages, disadvantages, ease of use, technology required, and cost.

When decide what portfolio, Barrett lays out steps to creating a portfolio: collection, selection, reflection, and projection. One of the most important steps for me was the reflection part. In art, we call these artist statements, which consist of a reflection of your artwork. I think, in education, we do not get enough feedback from the students on how they think they did on a test, project, or assessment. For this step to an electronic portfolio, I think that it would be a worthwhile tool to use.

While this article presented basic knowledge about electronic portfolios, I would have been interested in learning about current ways to create electronic portfolios. Since 2000, when the article was written, I am sure that there are a lot of web based electronic portfolio programs out there. With a quick search on the internet, I found Foliotek, Desire2Learn, Digication, E-scape, Elgg, MAPS, Pass-port, PebblePAD, and RCampus. In college, I used an electronic portfolio called efolio Minnesota, which I used in college. With technology changing all of the time, it is difficult to decide which electronic portfolio to implement without it becoming obsolete.

The possibilities for electronic portfolios within a classroom setting are endless. As an art teacher, I would be very interesting to begin to create online portfolios of a student’s artwork when they are younger and continue it as they go through school. For students and teachers to see the broader growth would beneficial to understanding the student as a whole not just the short glimpse we get for the quarter, semester, or even year.

Works Cited

Barrett, H. Create Your Own Electronic Portfolio. *Helen Barrett*. Retrieved December 1, 2011, from www.helenbarrett.com/portfolios/LLwTApr00